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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



[*The Editor is not responsible for opinions expressed in this Department.*]

CATHETERIZING OF MALE PATIENTS

DEAR EDITOR: As to catheterizing of male patients, we all seem to agree that it is not necessary to make a practice of doing it in ordinary cases, but an emergency justifies our doing it sometimes.

I have been in private practice eight years, and while I was taught how to catheterize a male patient, the occasion did not arise for me to put it to practical use till a few months ago. I was nursing here in the little town where I live, and a young man next door was ill with typhoid. The doctor had been coming regularly to catheterize him. One evening he did not come at the usual hour and they could not find him by phone. The family came to me for advice. As I knew the doctor had a large practice, I thought he might be detained somewhere on a case he could not leave, which I found out the next day was true. There is another doctor in town but he is not on friendly terms with this family, or doctor either, so I decided the only thing to be done was to do it myself, as he was suffering so much, the family was distracted and my patient was becoming very nervous. It was all done in less than five minutes and his mother remained in the room with me all the time. When I left the house, she took both my hands in hers and thanked me with so much fervor that I was recompensed for the humiliation I endured, for it was not an easy task.

C. R. K., in October, speaks of single women "knowing little of things sensual, while men are susceptible to such influences." I have found out that when a man is ill, his passions are asleep, so he does not care whether it is a woman in the flesh or a wooden Indian that attends to his needs. When he is convalescent and begins to notice things, a woman with a very limited knowledge of human nature knows how to establish that little barrier of reserve which all men respect and never trespass.

My sympathy goes out to "A Subscriber" who writes in the September JOURNAL about a patient who asked her to reduce her fee. Nurses are not paid according to the amount of work they do—that is a worn-out phrase, but still true. We are paid for assuming the responsibility of a human life and for our efforts to restore a diseased body to health. Compare our duties in the sickroom with those of cook or laundress,—how much more manual labor they do for less money. Compare a surgeon's fee with the wage of a ditch digger who works hard ten hours a day. Compare a well-known surgeon of established reputation with one quite obscure and see the difference in the fee received for the same service and the same amount of time expended. A member of any profession has a right to place his own valuation on his services, and if people who are financially able do not care to pay his price, they should be satisfied with some one who values himself less.

X.